

**Head Start Performance Standards
Notice of Proposed Rulemaking
June 2015**

Operator: Welcome to today's webinar. If you have questions during this webinar, you are welcome to use the Question and Answer chat box on your screen to submit questions to the Office of Head Start, and we'll get those – to those at the end. Doctor –

[Begin video]

Dr. Blanca Enriquez: I woke up this morning with a smile on my face – and I am going to tell you why. It is because I know today is a great day. You know the feeling in the morning when you see one of our little ones come running into your center because they too know you have great things in store for them. That is the same feeling I am having right now because I know I have great things in store for you.

I am Blanca Enriquez, Director of the Office of Head Start. Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to be here with us. Secretary Burwell today announced the Notice of Proposed Rule Making on the Head Start Performance Standards, and I am absolutely thrilled to be a part of her vision for the future of Head Start. This historic document updates the very backbone of Head Start. I have more than 30 years as an educator and program director and have spent many worrisome nights navigating the Performance Standards and I am on the edge of my seat with anticipation to partner with you to continue improving Head Start.

Fifty years ago President Johnson began Head Start, and I am honored to bring my experience, no our collective experiences, to the table to strengthen our foundation for the next 50 years. More importantly is the fact that as we work together, the newly revised Performance Standards will strengthen some of our nation's most vulnerable children and families both now and in the years to come. President Obama said, "Change will not come if we wait for some other person, or if we wait for some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek." I don't share his words to say you need to look at yourself and change. I share his quote because it is transformative, and we at OHS have taken his words to heart and embarked on a journey to strengthen ourselves and the Performance Standards.

We are evolving, and I invite you to join us on our journey. I lived the Standards for 30 years and know what it is like out there. I know how burdensome the regulations can be and understand that there are duplications such as having to go through both federal and state safety inspections. I am elated to tell you that issues has been addressed. I know some rules are confusing and you sometimes make educated interpretations and hope you are correct. I am pleased to tell you that we have streamlined the Standards into four logical groupings while maintaining comprehensive services.

In an effort to increase flexibility we have removed regulations that are outdated or no longer relevant. You are the ones doing the "good work" and you know how best to create a quality program with the highest outcomes. I know how bureaucracy sometimes hinders your ability to maximize operations and that is why we enhanced local control and encourage increased innovation. I want you to develop a systems approach so that your program will weather the transitions of staff and time. I want you to look around at your Head Start community and grow future leaders so that your program always has a committed and qualified team. Some of the changes have arisen out of your direct communications with us.

Thank you for your honesty over the years. I invite you to continue providing written feedback as that is the best way we can be responsive to your needs. I invite you to read the Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) and give us constructive thoughts - every comment is valued and considered. When you give us feedback, consider the concept of "quality." What does "quality" mean for our teachers and staff? What does "quality" for parents and children mean. What is a "quality" program and how can we make it happen? If you like a proposed change, let us know, then tell us why. On the other side, if you see something you don't care for, tell us those reasons too. We have this amazing opportunity before us to impact children and families both today and in the future. Partner with us so that we can create Standards that create value for future generations of staff, educators, family, and community members. Reorganizing, streamlining, and reducing the regulations will support all Head Start grantees in being high performing organizations.

These proposed changes are central to the Administration's belief that every child deserves an opportunity to succeed and that all children should graduate from high school, college and career ready. Innovation like this continues to elevate Head Start as the premier national early childhood program that we are rightfully proud of. This is the most holistic revision and reorganization of the Head Start Performance Standards since they were originally established in 1975, and I am honored to be working with each and every one of you to ensure they are worthy of our pride, but most importantly they are worthy of the legacy we are creating for some of our nation's most vulnerable children and families.

It is my honor now to introduce Ann Linehan, Deputy Director of the Office of Head Start and Colleen Rathgeb, Director of the Division of Policy and Planning here at the Office of Head Start. Together they will introduce the proposed Standards.

[End video]

Ann Linehan: Thank you, Dr. Enriquez. And thanks to the magic of technology, Dr. Enriquez spoke to us from Chicago, where she was with the Secretary today when the announcement was made for the new - for the NPRM. So, Colleen and I are very, very happy here, to be able to take you through a series of slides. We have an awesome task to do in a little over - a little under an hour. So, we want to get through the slides fairly quickly so there will be time for you to ask questions. We also want you to know that the slides that we are showing you today will be up on ECLKC later - by the end of the day. And first, let me start out with a little bit of the background. For many - Most of you are familiar with this. Clearly the Head Start Standards are our federal regulations that set the rules for all Head Start and Early Head Start programs. We know that the Improving the Head Start Act for School Readiness in 2007 called for a renewed - for a reviewed revision of the Performance Standards to really ensure that all programs are providing high-quality, comprehensive services that reflect current research, best practices, and program experience. And we certainly know that some of you are saying, "It's about time you got these out."

Well we think, in this case, procrastination served us well, because it gave us time to really read all the results of the research, the consultations that we did, which had to be over a thousand, and, and we think that this really - this set of proposed rules really reflects the best. We'll also have some news a little bit later in the PowerPoint, to tell you a little bit about how much we've streamlined of the Standards. Again, the things that drove this holistic revision - again we're strengthening services to reflect research and best practice. We wanted to improve the clarity and transparent - transparency to support better program delivery. Not only for current grantees, but also we don't want it to be a

daunting task for folks interested in becoming grantees, to think that's way too complicated to even apply. Very mindful of reducing the administrative burden, and allowing grantees to focus on high-quality services.

And again, as Dr. Enriquez said, maintaining the core Head Start principles, including the comprehensive services and parent engagement, and serving the needy as well as respecting diversity. Colleen?

Colleen Rathgeb: Alright. So, I want to start by walking through a little bit to get folks oriented to the new organization that we are proposing in the Standards. I think Anne and Dr. Enriquez have mentioned, we have a current – we have 11 sections. They have been changed in a piece-meal fashion over many, many years. And so, it's resulted – it is not particularly easy to figure out what you're looking for, where it is. And so, one of the things that we think will be helpful is a whole new frame on the way we organize the Standards. So we are in four sections with one definitions, of all the definitions in the final section. So, 1301 is now Program Governance. 1302 – the new 1302 will be on program operations. The new 1303 – all the administrative and financial requirements will be in that one section, and then 1304 is all of the requirements that are actually requirements on us. So, there are many places in the Act that the Secretary needs to lay out the procedures that OHS will take with respect to different operations. And so, that is what is laid out in 1304.

And as I said, 1305's all the definitions. I'm not – I'm just going to quickly try to give people a picture of what's in each of these sections. So, this is what – the parts and the subparts. And the regulations are, are called. So, as I said, 1301 Program Governance is all on its own. We know that this is so core and central to Head Start. This is its own section, its own part of the regulation. In 1302 Program Operations. Everything that we lay out about providing high-quality comprehensive, early learning program services. So, everything from who's eligible, and how do you recruit selective enrollment, to everything you have to do as program managers with data to ensure you're continuing improving. So we start with ERSE. We move into program structure. So everything about our program options: ratios, class size, the amount of time you need to serve kids. Then we move into services. Education and child development services, health services, family and community partnership services, additional services for children with disabilities, transition services, services to enroll pregnant women. So those are our core – all the services you provide. And then, we talk about the HR management that you need to do to support the staff that provide those services. And then, the program management and quality improvement for the use of your management systems and continuous improvement using data to support all of those services.

So we think it's helpful that this will all be in one core place, to be able to compare. We then go into financial and administrative requirements. Financial. Administrative. We're going to talk about a new section there that's on protections when sharing data, delegation of program operations for those grantees that have delegate agencies, facilities, and transportation. 1304, the final section that we talked about, that's really about the laying out the opera – the federal, the requirements on us, monitoring, adverse actions and the appeals of those actions, the designation renewal system, selections of grantees through competition, replacing American Indian/Alaska Native programs and the Head Start Fellows. The final section is all of the definitions in one place.

Ann: And while we have historians out there that could cite a regulation at any moment's notice, they will have to learn the new numbering system, but we think that's a very good thing in this case. And again, I – again, as Dr. Enriquez said this several times over, really we want to simplify the regulatory language, streamline the requirements, and eliminate the redundancies. And I do have to say, we want

the Standards, we want these proposed rules to meet the test of, you're reading something and you're not saying, "I wonder what the Federal Government meant by this. We hope that they are clear, and that they need no interpretation.

Colleen: We also hope that they meet the test that we think that if we – are we keeping a regulation, that you, you agree, or tell us when you don't. That we should have eliminated. It is redundant. It is confusing, like Ann said. But we are specifically asking for comments, are there, were there provisions that we either kept or changed that you think aren't important and be linked to quality.

Ann: Absolutely.

Colleen: So, one of the biggest things beyond, we talked a lot about the transparency and the reduction, and the eliminating redundancy. One of the other central, most important things that both Congress asked us to do, and we really think in looking in, and lived with the current education standards that we have, just are not as strong as they could be. They're not as strong as many, many, many of our programs out there are actually doing much more than our regulations say, and they definitely have not kept pace with the two decades of research about how kids learn, what are the most important things that's going on – that need to be going on in classrooms. And we really feel like this is a place where Congress asks us to look at it, and we think we certainly can improve our regulations to keep pace with the best practices that you, many Head Start programs and many other programs could be doing.

Ann: And I think, Colleen, this is really – when you take a look at the bullets on this slide, what the National Centers have been doing over the past, I would say, three or four years, the types of materials we've been disseminating are absolutely aligned with, for example, usable information for teachers. I think about all the things that NCQTL has been publishing. So I think that, again, we are proposing to qualify what, again you said, most – we believe most programs are already doing.

Colleen: I think that's right. And we really think that there's a power in the Head Start Standards of where they can push the field broadly in early childhood, and really making it clear that this is what we want programs to be doing. So, they're not saying conflicting things in the Standards, and that what they are getting through training, what they are seeing as best practices through expertise. So programs that have been working on their, or keeping up with the research are absolutely going to be right there. So as Ann said, the curriculum – we're really pushing that the content is rich enough that we're really being able to move the needle for kids on what they're being exposed to and the rich engaging, excellent, effective teaching and learning that's going on in those classrooms. And again, on those assessments, using useful information. We don't want to create more paperwork just for programs – for teachers, that isn't really giving them useful information used to guide and individualize that learning activity for children. And we also much more clearly, I think, in the education standards articulate a birth-to-five approach, and what's different for Early Head Start, and particularly for home-based.

For the first time, we're going to have a section in the education standard, that explicitly talks to education in the home-based options, since that obviously very different than education for – in center-based option, whereas the health and family services is really the same. We're also strengthening the education by looking at how we're supporting better teacher for quality and effective teaching practices – looking at core competencies, looking, looking about how professional development really focuses on best practices, including evidence-based coaching strategies being available as part of your suite of what you do professional development, and really integrating the professional development and the supervision with the teaching practices, the curriculum implementation, the assessment – kind of tying

that all together to make sure we're really thinking about it as a real holistic picture that we need to be doing throughout our programs. So it's also very exciting today, in support of this holistic approach of looking at the education services, we are also online today, the revised Birth to Five Early Learning – Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework. So, folks know five years ago, we had revised the Framework, and that's expected that that will be continued in as the field evolves. We're really excited today that the Framework is now looking Birth to Five. And so, we want to – we had many programs tell us, "Don't put out the Framework two months before the Standards, or six months later, put out something else. Put things out together so that people can get the whole vision of how these things work together." And so, that's what we're doing. We will be setting up another webinar, probably for next week, that we can dig more into the Framework, and talk to people about how that works. But working together – when the final Standards are out, and the Framework is out, we really think they, they work together nicely to promote high-quality services and practices.

Ann: And I think, I think, Colleen – one of our colleagues said during a presentation – the Framework is not an assessment, it's not a curriculum, it is a foundation. But I think it's also going to be an incredibly helpful learning tool, a professional tool, particularly as new teachers enter the field of early childhood education.

Colleen: I think that that's exactly right.

Ann: So that – the next one, the next slide here really – this is where when we talked about the education section, you know, being the, what we call, the biggest list, clearly we're now talking about moving, looking at the options, and looking at what's best for children, particularly as it relates to dosage. And Colleen is going to take us through this section, and we know that this section, clearly, these are proposed. This is a section that many people will right now look at and say, "This is fantastic!" There could be other people that are in other situations and say, "Wow. How do we ever get there?" But Colleen, take us through this.

Colleen: Okay. So, in program structure which with the program options in Head Start we are proposing to move down to three standard options and a locally designed option. So the three standard options would be: center-based, family child care, and home-based. So, in center-based, we are no longer – we would no longer have the option of double session, part-day or full-day. We would have center-based which is at least six hours per day and 180 days per year. So a full school day, and a full school year for all preschoolers in center-based options unless they came in for a locally designed option. For infants and toddlers, we're codifying – We've always since we started the, the Early Head Start in the '90s, it is always been a continuous program. We've always talked about a full day and a full year. We've never had that codified regulations. Does that mean 48 weeks? Does that mean 52 weeks? And we're, we're laying it out, that what we mean in a minimum of 6 hours a day, and 230 days per year. So those are the proposals for the standards, center-based options. And we're going to talk in the next couple of slides about why we are proposing this – this change. We think there is a compelling, growing evidence that this is really what our children need to be able to truly have the type of outcomes that we are looking for in high-quality programs. So, that would mean that we're eliminating the double-session as a standard option. We are also proposing that home-based would only be a standard option for Early Head Start. Only for infants and toddlers.

We currently have very low number – less than two percent of preschoolers are served in the home-based option. That is something that programs – If it meets the needs of the community, if there's reason that programs are operating that, that's what families need and want that can continue on to the

locally designed option. But it would not be considered a standard option under our proposal for Head Start. Again, two percent of Head Start. In Early Head Start, it's almost half. So, it – Also, the combination option, which again, is even smaller. Less than one percent of programs operate combination options. That would also no longer be a standard program option, but would be able to be a locally designed if that really is working for communities, and children are making progress. So –

Ann: I think it would be fair to say that the locally designed option – the bar is high. I mean, it – children have got to be making progress.

Colleen: And we need to say that there's a reason that these are – so people are really thoughtfully – and we know that there may – there actually may be communities where this is the right approach. We just want people not to be doing it because they've been doing it for 20 years, or for whatever. They're kind of stuck in this option. But to say, "This is what really works for my community. I'm going to come to the Office of Head Start, tell them, explain to them how it does, show how my kids are, are making progress." And then, we'd be able to, to look at that.

Ann: So, I'd like to eliminate about 50 questions that may come in. Can you tell us what the clock means?

[Colleen laughs]

Colleen: So, the clock may have been my office getting a little happy with Clip Art. But we were – It's the time. We're increasing the time that kids are in Head Start. And it's so colorful.

Ann: You don't allow drafters to get creative.

Colleen: Alright. So, that means we'll get back to our data. So, people – to see most preschoolers right now in Head Start we don't believe are receiving enough early learning time. And we'll – we want to be very clear. When we talk about early learning, we talk about exciting, kids are loving it, they're engaged, teachers are doing developmentally appropriate activities that are intentionally learning the kids. We are not talking about little Kindergarten or first grade, or nothing else. We are very clear. We need good, high-quality, effective learning going on in these com – in these classrooms. And, unfortunately, that many are just not getting enough of it. So, about 57 percent of our kids, our children, our preschoolers already receive 6 hours or more. But only 31 – so only about a third received at least 180 days. We have more than a quarter of children – 28 percent of children are getting that bare minimum of three and a half hours. And 16 percent are getting only 128 days.

Ann: That is, that is just not enough.

Colleen: That is not enough. Children in programs that are operated under our current minimums. So, for the three and a half hours for 128 days, they are literally getting half, less than half the learning time that a child would get in a full day, full school day, full school year Head Start or Pre-k program.

Ann: And I think, we were going to mention this at a later slide. But I think when you take a look at the children the percentages that are only in for three and a half hours, or 128 days, and you look at the time. The very important activities of, you know, nutritious meals, transition times, going out gross motor activities – these are all important to – going to the bathroom routines and hand washing, and tooth brushing. These are all important. And they're important learning opportunities. But they're

absolutely do not allow enough time for very intentional, deliberate teaching around the science, the math, and the literacy that children absolutely need to ensure success in schools.

Colleen: And engaging in excellent ways. So, why are we doing this? What is the need? We really, we think that taking together the idea of pushing program quality. So, all programs are doing this high, intentional, classroom activities have to happen. But also, the time spent has to be able to – has to be longer to have stronger more lasting effects. So there's research on full days, both in pre-Kindergarten, and Kindergarten. Research on what Ann was getting at – on how much instructional time is needed. And again, engaging activities that are, have instructional goals not didactic instruction, really show that there's just not enough time in just three and a half hours a day. We know so much about the summer learning loss, and it's even more for poor children, how much they lose over the summer. To have a four-month break in some cases is just really not going to give us, the kids the boost they need when they get into Kindergarten. And there's also research about that children in full-day programs have better attendance. And attendance in early childhood is more and more being shown to be strongly connected to attendance in third grade, which has long-term implications on dropouts and success in school broadly. So we really, we need to – All of these things are coming together, as well as – that these – those requirements are more inline some of the very high-quality preschool programs that have shown stronger effects and lasting effects. And so,

Ann: A little later, we're going to show, we'll shift also in how we look at attendance.

Colleen: I think that's right. That's exactly, it is. It is so important. So, and getting what Ann was getting at. That we just know that a half-day program, both good, high-quality teaching is done in small groups, and one-on-one instructions, and providing lots of great activities for children that really have an intentional, skill develop in mind takes time. And the important comprehensive services that we also, also are critical in our classrooms also take time. So, it just – it's hard to do the math to get to three and half hours can do the important – all of the important pieces that we need to do.

Ann: Colleen, could you talk a little bit – again, because I think that there are grantees out there that are in three and a half programs, or double-sessions right now are listening to this and, absolutely agreeing with the research but are saying, "How quickly?" you know. What are we proposing around implementation or phasing?

Colleen: Yes. Thank you. So, we are – in the proposed rule, we have said, we lay out effective dates. So, that would be when this regulation come into effect. And what we have proposed, but we also have explicitly asked for people to give us comments about this, about the timing. What we have proposed is that the requirements on increasing the dose – going into the fuller day, the full-day and the full school year kick in, would come into effect for the program year that begins a full year, at least a full year after the final rule gets issued. So if the final rule was issued in, next summer, it would be the following school year that would start. So it wouldn't be for two years starting from now. If the final rule didn't get published for a year and half. So if that's published in, let's say November or December of 2016, it would be a year – another – you wouldn't be for the next September. It would be for a whole other cycle.

So, we want to tie it, what we're proposing is that we tie it to the beginning of the program year to minimize disruption and that we make sure that programs have, at a minimum, a full year to think about how they can do this in the best way. And we also have in the proposal – If a program that was in, say, double-sessions, and it was going to be very difficult to do it within that one year frame, to the next program year, or that they were worried that because they had a very high enrollment of very young

children, that it would, it could cause disruption. So currently enrolled children, could be disrupted based in it, we're offering opportunity to come in and say, "I need another year." And so, that are the pieces of the proposed – on the timeline.

Ann: It's not about displacing children currently served.

Colleen: Absolutely right. So, we really – And again, programs a thoughtful approach, to really be thoughtful about it. And so, we're asking for comments if that horizon is both – we're asking for comments on, is this the right direction. Do you agree with the case that we are making; why this is important to children and families and why we should move in this direction? And so, we want comments on the content, of the substance of the proposal. We also want comments on that, if you agree, what would be the appropriate timeline for implementation be. So, in and again, as Ann and Dr. Enriquez both clearly said, we in this proposal are absolutely maintaining and strengthening the comprehensive services of Head Start that's so core to, to what Head Start is, and was so clear in the Act that was – where we were supposed to stay. So, in the health services we hope that you'll agree, or you'll look at it and give us feedback about it being clear. That we are – we've maintained the timelines for the requirements that are currently in there. We try to be clear to show the progression of what you have to do to ensure that children are – have a source of care, are up to date, if they issues of – schedule follow-ups. We are clear around that source of care, that we don't want that to be an ER or an urgent care, we want it to be somewhere that maintains a child health record because that's so important to a continuity in health care delivery. Also we want to make implicit, which we know almost all programs do, which is helping children act as health insurance if they do not have it. We know, again, what most programs do. We're just catching up our regulations to this. The same on strengthening parent education. In mental health, we are trying to – we're ensuring that the use of mental health consultants, which exists now, is really being used to promote effective classroom management and supporting teachers addressing challenging behaviors.

Ann: And, I think, maybe a good example of the direction I think we're taking – It's not – the focus is not about having the mental health contract that we recommend and check whether or not you have it. It's really understanding what that mental health consultant is, should be engaging in with teachers, helping them reflect on what the dynamics – behavior dynamics are in the classroom.

Colleen: That's right. So, we're trying to really focus on what's the outcome – the program outcome we're looking for, that the teachers get the support and the families get the support. And you are experts on how that works in your programs, so that we're less trying to prescribe the process you use, but more say, this is what, the outcome we want. We want your teachers to have the access to the supports they need.

Ann: So, I think Colleen, it would be safe to say both on the health services and mental health, it's not – we're not talking about huge lifts, huge changes. It's really just clear, and with a clarity it becomes stronger.

Colleen: I think, Ann, that's right. And I think this where, the place we want to say, gosh. You really, you know, have always thought something should be changed that was import – it was, should be and we didn't, let us know. That's what we really want to hear in the comment process. Or that inadvertently, changing something we created a different problem that we weren't intending to. Similarly, in parent engagement services, we think we are strengthening, we are being clearer, we're making it a little less process oriented, we're trying to take off any interpretation – that this is more of a paperwork exercise,

focusing less on the, you know, being a partnership agreement than on the services. So again, trying to get a little bit out of us, priming all the processes, making it clear that while there are base services that need to be available to all families, that programs have the flexibility to target where they believe services are most needed, but that in all programs, part of that suite, what folks offer to parents includes some opportunities for evidence-based – participating in evidence-based parenting curriculum. In, similarly, I'm trying to get out of us dictating all of the process in the area of child safety. And we have a couple places where we are prescribing new processes, and that primarily is the background check. But the main approach to child safety is really ensuring that grantees establish a system of management training, oversight, and improvement so that you will implement design, put in place and implement strong health and safety practices. Ann: And I think a good example of that is really shifting the responsibility from, from the Federal Government to oversee, to really saying, "Grantees, you really need to be accountable for some of – setting up those systems. So you're going to see – you will not see things like the three inches between cribs. And, not only – and I think you're going to be able to align it with the state, your licensing. We also think that there, you know, diverse programs in this country, the geographic spread. The health and safety concerns in Alaska may be very different than they are in southern Florida. So again we're not – it's not stepping away from the seriousness of ensuring children are safe, it is just recognizing that it may look different in different places.

Colleen: That's right. And there is another – a new resource that is available, will be out this week. Many people are familiar with Caring for Our Children, when it comes out of the American Academy of Pediatrics. ACF has recently released for public comments, and will be releasing a version of what we're calling Caring for Our Children Basics that gives programs more details on the processes to put in place, procedures that really can ensure that you are setting the floors. So, we ask programs to consult that document in developing their policies. Those policies, the procedures in Basic are non-Head Start regulations, and they will not be monitored on. But again, we want programs to consult this important resource as they develop their policies and procedures. And since we're also – this is a tool that is also available to space as well. We think that also can help that alignment so that we're not having folks feel like they've got four, five, you know, different systems of checking slightly different things and, in safety. With that being said, I will say, on a background checks, where childcare and childcare re-authorization, and other programs have moved farther than Head Start has on the background checks from – We were the big push now last re-authorization, and folks had to do a criminal background check, either state, federal, or tribal before someone was hired. We have maintained that. But we have strengthened those important requirements in that – within 90 days of hire, the – we are proposing that the other criminal background check be conducted.

Ann: And the one before hire.

Colleen: That's correct. And then, within 90 days, which is considered consistent with the childcare – that they have to have both childcare – the CCDF in the new law, and that they will be repeated every five years. So, we will that is out for the proposal. Again, on the core aligning of Head Start and keeping those, the focus on supporting all children, we are – we're making sure that we're strengthening our services, and continue to have strong services for children with disabilities, connecting with not only IDEA, but also making sure other children that are do not have IFPs or IEPs, that are with disabilities, are strongly supported.

Ann: And I, I think we are – well I should say we are – I think the Head Start community's going to welcome that last bullet because I think when we did the last – the last revision we basically said you know, if the kids are non-identified through IDEA, then, you know, we can't even do our own IEPs. Now,

you know, we're not suggesting we're going back to writing IEPs because we're not. But we're recognizing that there is a subset of children who are not going to meet, who are not going to be IDEA eligible, but we still need to provide – Head Start programs need to provide for those children. And I think people's embracement is a very good change.

Colleen: So, the – also similarly, really looking to see how we can improve services to make sure we're fully supporting the serving and the stability of support for participation of homeless children. So, we have proposed some administrative flexibility to facilitate certain homeless children and more clarity about supporting them through transitions that they and other mobile populations. And, dual language learners, again, where Head Start has been a leader, we are I think, continuing to push and to learn from the research about how best to support dual language learners, by supporting bilingualism, and by really making sure we're integrating research-based approaches, intentional approaches our program. And Ann previewed the attendance coming.

Ann: Oh right.

Colleen: But we do – there's more and more research about the importance of attendance in early – in early education programs and how much that can really set up a long-term attendance issues that are really critical in school and beyond. And so, we're trying to put a focus more on the individual tracking of attendance as opposed to the more, primarily on the 85 percent in the current.

Ann: Because I think we all, we all know that there are some children that are chronically absent. And those are the children – while you may be over the 85 percent may have really good attendance, we really want to bring a greater focus on and attention on to those children that are chronically absent and really that's where the services should be enhanced to support the families.

Colleen: We also are, for the first time, explicitly addressing expulsion and suspension. We think it is wonderful that in – where, across early childhood this is being highlighted more and more as a very serious problem where children are being expelled in large numbers, from early childhood programs and particularly boys of color, that we think Head Start has definitely been a leader in this area, that this is not our culture. We have regulations that, you know, get at that, that this not what we do, but we think that it's very important that we have a very explicit, clear prohibition and talk about how programs are able to individualize services for children with challenging behaviors.

Ann: Well, and that's also connected to why the mental health consultants' work is so important in working with teachers. Now we will – you'll also notice that when you read the proposed rules, we, there is a provision that says there's going to be some isolated examples where we know, despite every effort that the Head Start program has made, it may not be the right setting for that child. In those situations, you'll note that we're talking about a very deliberate transition plan into another setting. So even in cases where determination's been made, we're really talking about transition into another program. We feel very, very, very strongly about this. And I take that they – I think that the community will also embrace this.

Colleen: Again, you know, this is new, and this why we're here, but we think that this is something that we want to continue to have Head Start as a leader of – critical importance of being able to serve all children. The final section in the programs operations is about how we want to use the regulations to really promote data-driven decision-making. We think that lots of programs are doing that, as Ann talked about. Folks that the TAs have really been out there from us and others about how do we really

all the data that Head Start programs collect. How are you using that to really both make sure you have ongoing oversight that is correcting problems and making sure you're providing high-quality, also using that data to revise your goals, to change your programs, to continuously improve. So we really have a proposal that lays out the focus of the management systems should really be on that use of data in multiple levels.

Ann: And we know that many, many of the annual reports that we see, that grantees publish, put up on your websites – you're already doing this. So, it's really codifying. Again, we're catching up with what the field is doing.

Colleen: Governance. So as I said, 1301, the first section of the regulation, is the post regulation, lays out governance. For the area, we really, essentially, more than anything, we are removing parts of our current regulation that are really already overtaken by the statutes. So, since the statutes changed, our discussing monitoring, our monitoring of our governance which relies primarily on the statutes. And so, we're updating our regs to really align with and reflect the statutory requirements. Very much ensure both strong accountability and governance – by the governing body, and maintaining the critically important role of parents in the Policy Council and policy committees in setting the direction for the program. We also, in a couple of places, so essentially, so basically, there's not a a lot of new policy in the governance section, because that policy was really set by the Act. And so, the two places that we do, and we think some transparency, we are trying to set up impasse procedures. So we have done that. And we also have outlined how a governing body uses its authority to establish an advisory committee when they want to have an advisory committee to do more of the day to day oversight. So, we also have a vision – two provisions that we think can give a little more local flexibility in governance, and we expect, you know, we want to hear from folks about that.

So, we have right now term limits for policy council and policy committee members of up to three years. We are proposing to change that up to five years. So govern – so programs can certainly set a lower term limit if they prefer. We think this both lines up with the five-year, the five-year grants, and it also lines up with the idea of a birth-to-five participation of parents. But we want to hear from folks on that. We also have removed the requirement that every local center must establish a parent committee. Because we want to both allow programs to see if that's approach has been working for you, and you want to continue that, that's wonderful. If you have other approaches that would better work at engaging parents in all settings, that's that's excellent too. And, again, we're looking at, what's the program we want is that to engage parents, all of those, but we're not going to say that in every model, that having a full parent committee for each center, or each child that that makes sense.

Ann: And also recognizing that many programs have different models, where you may have mixed children – children that are enrolled in Head Start, just looking at the partnerships, and other children that are not. So, again, we're not stepping away from the importance of the parent – the family engagement, but the parental involvement, we're just saying we don't want to get prescriptive. You deal with it at that level.

Colleen: We don't need to prescribe. We're not prescribing that from Washington. In the administrative and financial requirements, now this is where we're really trying to eliminate redundancy, streamline, clarify. We've really tried to remove Head Start specific requirements when there's another requirement that's already government-wide. So, we had a Head Start – one that was slightly different, or tweaked, and you would have to follow the government-wide procedures for other options – other – as well, and we really have taken a lot of pieces out here. We have tried to less prescribe the process. For example,

in the administrative, the way you determine what's a administrative cost versus a program cost, much more, I'm saying, this is, this is ultimately what we want you to be able to do. The caps haven't changed. The waivers haven't changed. But we may get much less what we're prescribing the process you have to use. In a similar vein, we are proposing to increase the autonomy grantees have in their oversight of delegate agencies. So, in the current regulation, they're very prescriptive, process-laden steps around delegate appeals that come to the federal level. We have moved away from that and it again more about the grantee establishing the oversight and the procedures for their oversight of their delegate agencies. In facilities and transportation. Facilities, we've tried to make it clear the steps you need to go through – eliminating, again, the places where the requirements were, were overly burdensome. But at the same time, make sure that we have very strong ability to make sure – the Federal Government isn't investing large amounts of money into facilities that is, the projects are value-added, make sense both from financially and with the integrity of the facilities, and that the federal interest is protected. And again, those are only on programs that are actually given money to build or renovate facilities. And similarly in transportation, that we just, we eliminate some of the provisions that were out of date, we take off some of the timelines around the trainings, for training safety, and a little bit more on the outcome that we want to happen, but less on we're prescribing exactly the when and the how. The new section on – in the financial and administrative reporting requirements is about the privacy of child records. We've heard lots of programs that they're not sure what they need to do to participate in safe data systems, to share information with parents or others. And so, and there was a requirement in the Act that we prescribe standards that were consistent and similar to FERPA, the education privacy standards. And so, we have done that. We have laid out parental – the need for parental consent, and the proposed exceptions to this consent.

Similar to FERPA, we have laid out parents – the right parents have to inspect and mend, and challenge those records, as well as the requirements around maintenance. So, you know, we're hoping that folks will give us lots of feedback on this section. We really are trying to balance the need to ensure privacy with the value of sharing data. So, this is a brand new section that we were required to lay out. And the last section, section 1304, is where federal administration procedures are laid out. And so, it puts all the places in one. We already talked through the kind of monitoring, DRS, competitive decision, Indians and the Head Start Fellows. And so, we are not – we are including the current Designation Renewal System requirements. We are moving them into the structure, but we are not proposing any changes to that.

Ann: So – and for the next slide, and I think this is clearly – we know that grantees have already expressed some disappointment, as I think we shared early on, that we were not going to propose changes at this time because we have an independent evaluation system. And we're not expected to get those results until late this year. And we're also – this is as you know, we are entering into our final year of transition so that all grantees come next July 2016, will be transitioned into five-year project periods. Again, we will not be able to, obviously, we can't say, "You cannot commit!" But we will not be able to address any comment on DRS during this process. And again, we expect we will hear your voices on this.

Colleen: Just to underscore we absolutely, folks, you know, can – will hear the voices, but just to underscore that we can't, because we are not proposing any changes, kind of that last bullet, that is like a legal bullet. Because we're not proposing any changes to that part of the regulation on the triggers for DRS, we couldn't in the final make the changes it would, it would not be legal for us to make – we can't, we can't make the final rule without having proposed anything at all for change.

Ann: You know, one thing I want to say to the grantee community, is really, I think that there is so much that you have to comment on, whether or not you say we got it right, whether or not you say we need

to tweak it. There's so many things that we need your comments on, so we really can be as informed as possible when we do the final rule.

Colleen: We know folks are already asking questions about this. The NPRM part of the requirements is for us to do a really thorough estimation of the cost involved. And so, as well as the proposed regulatory texts, the preamble that explains the rationale for why HHS is proposing these changes. We also have a section in NPRM that very explicitly goes through every estimate of every change that we made, and estimates of the costs associated with this. We estimate – based on those estimates, we believe that the quality improvement in this NPRM will have a net costs of approximately a billion dollars. The President FY26 budget request requested nearly \$1.1 billion in additional Head Start resources to support these types of increases, particularly the the overwhelming amount of, of the costs that we estimate is for what the President requested the money – the \$1.1 billion for – which is the increased day and year. So again, the Office of Head Start or HHS cannot appropriate more money for a program. Only Congress can do that. But we also, we do want you to look at the estimates and the regulations, spend time with that, and see how well we did estimate that. But the regulation alone doesn't bring money to the President's budget request. And Congress needs to appropriate any additional money. The – alright.

So, what's next? So, the big next steps where the regulation will be open for public comment until August 18. It was previewed in the Federal Register today, and that is the link that you guys have gotten to be able to read it. It will actually be printed officially in the hard copy Federal Register on Friday. And so, that's when the, the public comment – I'm going to put my clock logo here, Ann – the clock starts. And it will be open through midnight on August 18. HHS by law must consider all the public comments received on the things that we proposed changes to in the regs.

Ann: So, I think we are really, for efficiency, I think although we will have to – we're really asking programs not to think about the 50 or the 100 letters. It's the same letter that everyone signs. I think having one letter with multiple signatures is more efficient from a review – from our perspective. And I think other things around. And we're hoping – we're asking – although we will take comments that are, you know, handwritten.

Colleen: Right. On paper.

Ann: Or paper. We certainly are asking folks to use the electronic system to the extent possible. We think that it is user friendly. And, it will be much more efficient.

Colleen: That's right. I'm going to give a couple more det – things, kind of just want to make clear. So after the public comment, we issue a final rule. The new Program Standards become in place. And, the effective dates, whether it's like sooner or longer effective dates in the rule, but until that time, current regulations remain in effect. So don't – this is all a proposal at this point. We want your comments. Final rule. Then, we figure – then we do what – the new rules aren't in effect until those effective dates. As Ann said, we are – we want comments. We really want folks' feedback. There's a lot, there's a lot of things in this NPRM, and we're really – I hope people can give good thoughts. We really would have hoped that these could have gotten out faster, and it wouldn't be during the summer. But maybe there's some, the silver lining can be, hopefully, people have a little more time to be with them and to give us really thoughtful response. We want you to comment on what's in and what's out. What should be in there, we didn't pose, what we dropped what we shouldn't. We want you to be explicit. Please, and I'm really literal here, tell us the page you're commenting on, or the number, the 1305A bla bla – tell us what you're commenting on so we can – and, and tell us what you think good sticks would be. Why you

didn't like something, why you did like something. What you're proposing as a fix. The more thoughtful and explicit you can be, and clear, like giving that number, that would be helpful. The other huge thing that will help, if people can use the regulations.gov electronic. It is quite easy, it is quite user friendly. You can upload a document or you can type it right in. So, we really are hopeful. It allows the analysis of all the comments to happen in a much more streamline way here. In the last rule we got about 95 percent of our comments on paper, and it creates a lot of steps that we have to go through that will make it harder to get a final rule out. So we're hopeful that folks, that technology that everybody's familiar with and can use has evolved, and a bit at your level, as well.

Ann: So, we got – I think we're just about over the hour. And so I think we want to go to some questions.

Colleen: Quick, and we'd want to let [Inaudible]

Ann: And, what I'd like to do is take a couple of easy ones. Several of you have written in questions. But, I'm going to take a couple of easy ones and leave the more challenging ones to you. The webinar – yeah, it's going to be archived, and it will be up next week on ECLKC. Is it going to be guidance piece that comes with the new Standards? That's got to be someone's who my age who's asking that, because we always have the Stan – the guidance that aligned the regulations that try to interpret what the regulations were saying. And then, most of us will look at the guidance for how we ran our programs. There will be no guidance per se, but what we've referred to, for example, Caring for Our Children, the Basics – that's a complimentary piece. It's not – it's separate from the standard. We talked about the framework. the framework is complimentary to the proposed rule. So, we are not, in the traditional way saying, "Are we going to have guidance that is published, that is going to align itself with each standard?" No. Again, Colleen, you covered when OHS will be informed, enforcing the new Standards. I think that's clear. And someone asked. So Caring for Our Children – is that going to override the instruction from your Head Start advisory committee? Absolutely not. Again, that's a resource that we're saying, it has valuable information that may inform some of the discussions that the health services advisory committee has.

Colleen: I can just a – folks asked if there would be more detail more information about volunteers. We do have a section on volunteers that explicitly lays out the health screenings that they need and the fact that they can never be alone with children. And so, that is largely maintained from the current. But you will see a certain section that is on – on that. You got a question about whether children who are not eligible for IDEA, would they fall into the 10 percent that are required to serve. And the 10 percent is established in the Act – that 10 percent of the children in your program, the expectation with the waiver is that 10 percent – it must be children who are eligible for IDEA. So the Act doesn't give us any – any ability to change that. And again, we still think that that is what people are striving for. We're serving I think, 13 to 14 percent of children, actually, who are eligible for IDEA nationally. So, we think that this is a very achievable goal. But again, when programs have reasonable reasons that they're not meeting that, that is something that we do provide waivers on.

Ann: And I think, just to maybe say this, Colleen, we can never, in a proposed rule, never contradict something that is in the statute, in the Head Start Act. I think another question that's interesting is that all the Head Start partnership discussion's going on – someone asked under the new regulations will families have to be working or going to school, or demonstrate a need for full day. When we talk about the six hours, we can consider six hours a full day. The appropriate dosage in six hours is considered a full day. So, a family – we're not talking about having to be, working to be in school eligible for that six hours. What we know, though, from our childcare partners and our partnerships – a full day for working families is often a 10-hour day or an 8-hour day. And again, that is something other folks do with other

sources of funding. We're really talking about this proposed rule, and supporting a 6-hour day for all, for all preschoolers.

Colleen: Yep. And we've got some more questions that came in about the, the duration proposal. One was how does those – the new program models effect Migrant and Seasonal? And you'll see that in each of the places that we talk about duration, we – similar to the current – we say how it's different for Migrant and Seasonal. And so we know when Migrant and Seasonals are operating, they're generally operating for much longer days. But, obviously, the model doesn't make sense. So ADD doesn't make sense as a model. So, Migrant and Seasonal still are, have their special provisions around, around their durations.

Ann: I know that PPI – I was going to say that – and the proper requirements. Can you – should tell – we should change that.

Colleen: I'm sorry. Yeah, I'm not – so the I'm try to get everything on the one slide for that one. So PPI is personally identifiable information. And we'll have – we have that defined in the regulations. So people should look at that, as well.

Ann: And someone asked if 1308 was now – what, where it falls in the new organization of the four sections.

Colleen: It falls into program operations. So, that is all into the 1302. It's in Services to Children with Disabilities. So, another question: are naps allowed in the six hours of service. Absolutely. And in fact, we have a provision that, that folks should look at in the education section that talks about how both meals, naps and rest time, other transitions are important parts of the learning day, and how the naps and rest time are necessary in programs that are operating six or more hours, and how meals need to be opportunities for socialization, and learning, and activities. But yes, naps are definitely, and/or rest time are allowed. And –

Ann: I think we're – I don't know if you just – Colleen – maybe a half question, but I think I know what it is. In the new, in the new proposed – the four day a week –

Colleen: Another good – another good example of where we're saying – we're setting, kind of, a more – we want kids in the standard option to get 180 days. You figure out what's the best – in your community what's the best way to do that. So we don't have a four or five day, if folks did four days, they would be serving much longer into the summer if it's to meet the 180 days, but we're setting the 180 days, and that for non-Migrant programs. And that is up to you whether that is four or five a days a week works best for your services and your communities.

Ann: And I think that, probably, I hope we have wetted folks' appetites. That they have now left the webinar, and are now in reading the proposed rule. Because I think we've gone through the questions. I think we've gotten – And I know we are exceeding our time limit here.

Colleen: And I'll just answer one more question. And I'll answer it because... Linda Smith addressed this, our Deputy Assistant Secretary over early childhood, this exact thing in a meeting recently. So lots a question about teacher compensation given the increased expectations. And one of the things that, that Linda said in a meeting talking about many issues, but teacher compensation did come up. But she wanted people to know, and to think about, and to all of this, and as she said, there is no Head Start in

the sky that is making this determination on what program's pay their teachers. And so, we understand that there is not been increased money, per se, for teacher compensation beyond partial COLAs for a number of years. But Linda really said to programs, we need to think about within the resources that programs have to make decisions about what, whether they can – if they're not paying a wage that is allowing them to keep teachers that they need, will there have to be some tough choices about whether they can and into the future serve as many children unless there are increased.

But we think that we really want to know – You guys are making the decisions about your programs, and there is not, there's a clear understanding from leadership here, policy officials, that if programs at some point need to serve fewer children to be able to do the high-quality services that they need, then that is not something that folks' will consider.

Ann: I think many of our grantees are thinking way ahead when this becomes final, because the questions now coming in that really – they're thinking about, "Wow, if this is final tomorrow." But one thing that I don't think we mentioned. and as we have transitioned into five-year grants, the community needs assessments.

Colleen: Yes. We have – in the proposal, we are proposing that it would be extended from three years to five years, with annual updates when there are changes in the community.

Ann: And again, someone asked: upon approval upon the final rule, will these replace the Performance Standards? Will they be additions to the current Standards? I think that if they were additions, folks would run us out of town. They are absolutely – when this is final, you put the current Standards books away. Shred it. These become – these replace, these will replace what we now use as our Performance Standards.

Colleen: And this incredibly important question, it's even getting at the heart of people to get their heads around, even in this process. But, the best way to think about it when you look at the proposed regulation, the final part of the package you'll see in the NPRM, not now, but if this were the final rule, and we were putting those out they literally replace them. Everything – so if something is not in there, don't think, "Oh because that's current. Or oh, that's because it's somewhere else." This is the whole – One of the reasons that we felt like it was important to do all of it together, even though it took us much – it took us longer to do that, is that we really wanted people to see, here's what we're proposing as the body of Head Start regulations. Tell us what we got right. Tell us what we got wrong. Tell us what you would change.

Ann: And I think that, another question that came in which is really along the same lines: will the current policy clarifications be rolled into the new regulations. Once we have the final rule, then it's our job to ensure that any policy clarification that is currently posted is still accurate. I suspect with the final rule, we may be taking down some of those policy clarifications, or revising them. But that's not even a job we can begin to think about until we have the final rule. So the current policy clarifications that are up would, would stay up until we determine that they are no longer applicable for another reason, or in fact they are not consistent with what the final rule says.

Colleen: I think that's right. I think the – maybe the last session we've got, and then we want to let Dr. Enriquez close us out before we've gone too far into your evenings. People asked to repeat where we can find the proposed rule. So, there are a couple of places. The easiest hopefully is to go to the ECLKC. There is a banner on the the NPRM. It is also posted under the Policy and Regulations section. If you can't click through the banner, a way to get to it, you can also go to the [federalregister.gov](https://www.federalregister.gov). So, if you go to our website, there's links to it. There's links – there will be a Program Instruction that will be coming

out that will have a link to it, as well, shortly. So, we're hope – we're trying to make it easy for folks to find it. If you have any problems finding it, email in to the Help Desk on the ECLKC.

Ann: And as we transition to Dr. Enriquez, I want to say, I just got a text, I love these texts. "What an exciting day for Head Start. Great webcast. And very excited about the changes." So, that's a nice way to end. Let's go –

[Video begins]

Dr. Enriquez: Let us remember that knowledge is more than power – with knowledge accompanies great responsibility. We have 50 years of research, data, knowledge, and millions of graduated success stories. We know both from anecdotal evidence, and more importantly, from decades of quantifiable research what works and what we can still improve upon, and it is our collective responsibility to incorporate those lessons learned into the new Performance Standards. Now is the critical time to make your voice heard. Leadership does not lie solely in the hands of the Office of Head Start, so much as in the hands of every parent, every teacher, every director, every governing body, and every community member.

We at the Office of Head Start are working hard to ensure all grantees have the necessary supports and we need your input to ensure we are developing and putting into place the best Standards. Remember, we are laying the groundwork that may be used for the next 50 years and I want to leave a legacy that we can all be proud to call “our baby.” Again, thank you for your time and for your thoughts on the Proposed Standards.

[End video]

[End webinar]